

	<h1>Information Bulletin</h1>	
	Topographic Engineering Center <i>U.S. Army 1999 Research & Development Organization of the Year</i>	March 2, 2000 Number 00-9

OFFICIAL

Mandatory use of government travel card

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army has issued Interim Guidance on Implementation of the Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998 concerning mandatory implementation of the Government Sponsored Travel Card.

Public Law 105-264 mandates that all federal employees who perform official government travel must use a government travel card (Nations Bank/Bank of America VISA) to pay for official travel expenses incurred on and after March 1, 2000. Any employee who does not have a government travel card, but who anticipates having to perform official travel on or after March 1, 2000, should apply for a government travel card. Employees who do not have to perform official travel in connection with their official duties do not need, and should not obtain, a government travel card.

Employees are advised that the government travel card shall only be used to pay for official travel expenses incurred in connection with the performance of official duties. Personal use of the government travel card is strictly prohibited and any unauthorized use may result in the cancellation of the card and/or appropriate disciplinary action. Account activity is closely monitored to detect any personal or unauthorized use of the card. GSA published a list of travel expenses that are exempt from the mandatory use. These include: Expenses incurred at a vendor that does not accept the government contractor-issued travel card; laundry/dry cleaning; parking; local transportation system; taxi; tips; meals (when use of the card is impractical, e.g., group meals or the government contractor-issued travel charge card is not accepted); phone calls (when a government calling card is available for use in accordance with agency policy); an employee who has an application pending for the travel card; individuals traveling on invitational travel; and new appointees.

Employees who use a government travel card also are advised that they must make timely payments to the card-contractor (Bank of America) as specified in the terms of the agreement. Any account balance that becomes 60 days or more past due will be suspended and/or cancelled and the employee may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Additional information will be distributed as Army publishes the final regulation. Questions should be directed to Diane Baysore, ERDC Agency Program Coordinator, (217) 373-7262, d-baysore@cecer.army.mil or the site APC's listed below.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Alexandria:	Chris Rollwagen	Shirley Armentrout or Gwen Barnes
Champaign:	Diane Baysore	Sally Hayes
Hanover:	Lillian Guay	Betty O'Donnell
Vicksburg:	Lois Williamson	Ed Aldridge
(Diane Baysore, Management Analysis and Manpower Division)		

Help avoid travel problems

Over the past couple of months, we have had an increasing number of travel requirements surface in the late afternoon each Friday. For OCONUS travel, it has been necessary to notify Mr. Roberto for guidance and assistance.

We understand there will be times when last minute travel can not be helped and we will be responsive to those situations. However, we request your assistance to ensure all travel is processed as expeditiously as possible to meet requirements and to avoid the potential of delayed travel.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

(Terri Norman, Team Leader, Travel Section, CERL, (217) 373-6708)

New Human Resource Homepage

Please check out the new Human Resource (HR) Directorate section of the ERDC homepage at <http://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/hr/index.htm>. The HR page now has a section for Vacancy Announcements, ERDC HR Regulations, Benefits Information, Demo Project, information about the CPAC Team and points of contact. There is a Bulletin Board where we will post current items of general interest. Coming soon are a Training and Development section, Labor Management section, and Position Management and Classification section.

Vacancy Announcement information for positions in the ERDC, the Vicksburg area, and other outreach announcements Corps-wide will be posted here, with a link to the full-text of the announcement.

(Susan F. Koh, Chief, ERDC CPAC Team CRREL, (603) 646-4500)

Hatch Act

The following extract is based upon the 1993 amendment to the Hatch Act.

Permitted political activities for most federal employees

Employees may take an active part in political activities, including political management and political campaigns, to the extent not expressly prohibited by law. Employees may:

- * Register and vote in any election;
- * Act as recorder, watcher, etc. at polling places;
- * Serve as an election judge or clerk;
- * While in a non-duty status, drive voters to polling places in their own car for a partisan candidate;
- * Express their opinion privately and publicly;
- * Be politically active;
- * Participate in the nonpartisan activities; and
- * Participate fully in public affairs;
- * Be an active member of a political party;
- * Serve as an officer of a political party;
- * Attend and participate fully in the business of nominating caucuses of political parties;
- * Organize or reorganize a political party;
- * Participate in a political convention, rally, etc.;

- * Display pictures, signs, stickers, badges, or buttons associated with political parties, candidates for partisan political office, or partisan political groups when off-duty;
- * Petition for a candidate for partisan political office;
- * Canvass for votes for a partisan political candidate;
- * Endorse a partisan political candidate in an advertisement;
- * Address a convention, caucus, rally, etc. of a political party in support of or in opposition to a partisan candidate;
- * Take an active part in managing the political campaign of a partisan candidate or a candidate for political party office;
- * Run as an independent candidate in a partisan election in an area approved by OPM;
- * Run as a candidate in a nonpartisan election;
- * Make a political contribution to a political party;
- * Attend a political fundraiser; and
- * Solicit, accept, or receive uncompensated volunteer services.

Prohibited political activities for federal employees

Employees may not use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election. Employees may not:

- * Participate in any political activities:
 - While on duty;
 - While wearing a uniform, badge, insignia, or other similar item that identifies the employing agency or position; or
 - While using a government-owned vehicle or while using a privately owned vehicle in the discharge of official duties;
- * Personally solicit, accept or receive a political contribution from another person;
- * Personally solicit political contributions in a speech or keynote address given at a fundraiser;
- * Allow their official title to be used in connection with fundraising activities;
- * Solicit, accept, or receive uncompensated volunteer services or political contributions from an individual who is a subordinate.

Questions regarding federal employees and political activities should be addressed to an Ethics Counselor:

For ERDC, the Ethics Counselor is William Lovelady at (601) 634-3311.

For MVD, the Ethics Counselor is Annette Kuz at (601) 634-5771.

For MVK, the Ethics Counselor is Henry Black at (601) 631-5074.

Travel update

Here is the current schedule for approving travel in CEFMS:

March 6-10	Vicki Ray	(601) 643-2378
March 13-17	Betty O'Donnell	(603) 646-4355
March 20-24	Vicki Ray	
March 27-31	Betty O'Donnell	

As always, if you have a question please contact your local Travel Specialist. In the event she is not available you may contact any ERDC Travel Specialist. (Terri Norman, Team Leader, Travel Section (217) 373-6708)

Commander's mailbox

ERDC team members are reminded that an electronic mailbox has been established to allow employees to send questions and/or comments to the Commander. If an employee wishes to remain anonymous, his or her name will be deleted from the question before it is forwarded to the Commander for comment. Employees' questions will be answered via return e-mail.

Answers to anonymous and frequently asked questions will be posted in the Employee Information Bulletin.

The address in Outlook is, "ERDC Commander." Again, all information is kept strictly confidential and all questions are addressed directly by the Commander.

ERDC publications on Internet

The ERDC Publication Bulletin serves as the official notification of new ERDC forms and publication, as well as rescissions or changes to existing forms or publications. As of Sept. 10, 1999, ERDC official publications ceased to be printed (i.e., Center Regulations, Circulars, Pamphlets, or Commander's Policy Memoranda). All ERDC official publications are now distributed in electronic format on the ERDC web site located at <http://erdc.usace.army.mil/pubs/index.htm>.

FOR THE DIRECTOR

JACKIE L. BRYANT
Public Affairs Office

U N O F F I C I A L

ASMC Luncheon scheduled

On March 16, the Mount Vernon Chapter of the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) is hosting their monthly luncheon at the Fort Belvoir Officers' Club. The speaker is **Adrian Cronauer, Washington D.C. Attorney and inspiration for the Film "Good Morning Vietnam"**. The cost is \$15 for ASMC Members and \$16 for Nonmembers. All TEC employees are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Please respond to me NLT COB March 3, by e-mail or contact me at (703) 428-6259 or ICOM 2350 if you are interested in attending the March ASMC Luncheon.

Also, please note that I'm your TEC ASMC POC, so feel free to stop by and see me or take a copy of the "Dollars and Sense" newsletter located outside my office (Room 645) if you're interested in finding out more about ASMC. ASMC is a nonprofit educational and professional organization for military and civilian personnel involved or having an interest in military comptrollership. ASMC promotes education and training of its members and supports the development and advancement of the profession of military comptrollership! Nonmembers are encouraged to join! Thanks for your time and have a nice day!

(Kathy Holcombe, TEC ASMC POC)

Toastmaster Club

Plans are underway to reactivate the BERHCERC (previously Board of Engineers, Rivers and Harbors Coastal Engineering Research Center) Chapter of Toastmasters. Meetings will be held in the Kingman Building. Toastmasters seeks to build leadership and communication skills.

For more information, contact Chris Schneider at 428-6268 or ICOM 2297.

Carpoolers Wanted!!

As many of you may know, HQ USACE is reorganizing and getting ready to move to the GAO building. HQ Civil Works Engineering and Military Construction are merging to one E&C Division and moving to the Kingman Building. Around September, about 70 people will be relocated to this complex. Most HQ personnel prefer to carpool and are looking to create or join carpools around the HECSA complex. Since I am in a carpool and losing a member due to this

reorganization, I am looking for new recruits. I thought other carpools/vanpools may also be interested in expanding their membership. I have contacted a few carpools/vanpools and started a master list to share with HQ personnel. If your carpool/vanpool is interested, please e-mail Rebecca Ragon with the following information: current number of members and how many people can join, departure location and time, work hours, AWS day (if applicable) and name of person to contact for more detailed information. Also, if you are not in a current carpool but wish to carpool, please send me your departure location and phone number. Many of the HQ personnel are coming from different areas and you may have neighbors that now are coming to the HECSA complex!

(Rebecca Ragon, 428-6766 ext. 2443 ICOM 2443)